

REMARKS

In response to the outstanding Final Office Action, Applicants submit the present Amendment in combination with an RCE.

Claims 1, 3-8 and 12 stand objected to because of confusion as to what subject matter is being claimed. Claim 1 has been amended to recite an arrangement for sealing one member relative to another member. Applicants have amended claim 1 to recite in the preamble an “arrangement” for sealing one member relative to another member. The arrangement includes a fitted element, a fitting element and a sealing element that is disposed in an opening formed in the fitted element. Accordingly, the structure of the respective parts of the arrangement have been positively recited and therefore, the objection to these claims should be withdrawn.

Claims 1, 3-8, and 12 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph. Claim 1 has been amended to make clear that there is only one obliquely protruding portion, with a second protruding part being part of the coupling feature. Based on the present amendment, Applicants submit that any confusion over the claim elements has been eliminated and therefore, this rejection should be withdrawn.

Claims 1, 3-8 and 12 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as failing to clearly recite the structure of the sealing element. Applicants have amended claim 1 to more positively recite the relationship of the sealing element to the other parts which are now positively recited in the arrangement of parts now set forth in amended claim 1. Withdrawal of this rejection is now in order.

Claims 1, 3-8, and 12 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Shimizu. Withdrawal of this rejection is in order based on the present amendment and the following comments. Claim 1 now recites that an arrangement for sealing one member relative to another member and includes a fitted element (which has an opening), a fitting element and a sealing element. The sealing element is interposed between an opening face of the fitted element and the fitting element and more particularly, the sealing element is disposed in the opening formed in the

fitted element with a face of the sealing element seated flush against one wall of the fitted element that defines the opening. This is clearly shown in Fig. 7 of the present application.

Applicants respectfully submit that this added feature is clearly neither disclosed nor shown in the Shimizu reference. In the claimed embodiment, the sealing element is disposed and retained in the opening formed in the fitted element, with a face of the body of the sealing element lying flush against one wall of the fitted body that defines the opening into which the sealing element is disposed. The opposite is true of the Shimizu sealing element in which it is the sealing element that includes an opening that receives a portion of the fitted or fitting element with the sealing element surrounding this portion of the fitted or fitting element. This is completely the opposite arrangement compared to the claimed sealing element. As can be seen in Fig. 7 of the present application, the second protrusion contacts this wall of the fitted element that defines the opening formed therein. Clearly, the Shimizu element has a completely different structure and configuration and therefore, it is mounted and interfaces with the fitted element or the fitting element in a completely different manner.

Reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection is now in order and is earnestly solicited.

Claims 2-8 and 12 should now be allowed as depending from what should now be an allowed independent claim 1.

Claims 9 and 10 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the prior art of Figs. 1 and 2 of the present application in view of Hyobu and Shimizu.

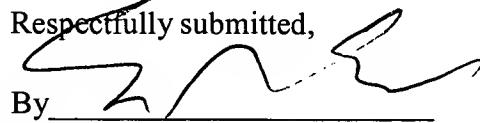
Claim 9 has been amended in a manner similar to claim 1 and therefore, should be allowed for the same reasons discussed above with respect to claim 1. In particular, the nature of how the sealing element is retainingly held is neither disclosed nor suggested by the cited references and in fact, an opposite manner of retaining the sealing element is disclosed. In addition, the Hyobu reference fails to cure the deficiencies noted above with respect to Shimizu.

Claim 10 should be allowed as depending from what should be an allowed independent claim 9.

In view of the above amendment, applicant believes the pending application is in condition for allowance.

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Respectfully submitted,

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